

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 7342

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR MILI GR FR

SUBJ: REPORTS OF FRENCH PLEDGE TO ACCELERATE ARMS DELIVERIES

1. THE LAST SEVERAL DAYS, THE GREEK PRESS HAS CARRIED REPORTS SUGGESTING THAT FRENCH PRESIDENT GISCARD D'ESTAING HAD MADE A PROMISE TO PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS TO SPEED UP THE DELIVERY OF PREVIOUSLY ORDERED FRENCH MILITARY EQUIPMENT. THESE REPORTS, WHICH ARE ATTRIBUTED TO FRENCH OR GREEK JOURNALISTIC CIRCLES, SUGGEST THAT THE PLEDGE WAS MADE IN THE COURSE OF THE WEEKEND CRUISE IN THE IONIAN SEA WHICH CAPPED THE GISCARD VISIT TO GREECE. THE REPORTS ALSO SUGGEST THAT THE SPEED-UP IN ARMS DELIVERIES WOULD ALSO BE ACCOMPANIED BY MORE FAVORABLE PAYMENT TERMS.

2. THE THREE MAJOR CATEGORIES OF EQUIPMENT IN QUESTION ARE (A) 40 MIRAGE F-1 AIRCRAFT, (B) 130 "AMX-30" TANKS, AND (C) 4 PATROL BOATS EQUIPPED WITH SURFACE-TO-SURFACE AND SURFACE-TO-AIR MISSILES. COMMENT: INFORMATION CURRENTLY AVAILABLE TO THE EMBASSY INDICATES THE FOLLOWING DELIVERY SCHEDULE WHICH WAS OPERATIVE
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BEFORE THE GISCARD VISIT: (A) THE GREEKS HAVE ALREADY

RECEIVED SEVEN OF THE F-1 MIRAGE AIRCRAFT AND ARE EXPECTED TO RECEIVE FIVE MORE BEFORE THE END OF THIS YEAR. THE REMAINING 28 WILL BE RECEIVED AT THE RATE OF TWO A MONTH STARTING IN SEPTEMBER 1976. (B) AS FOR THE AMX-30 TANKS, 26 ARE ON HAND ALREADY WITH THE REMAINING 104 TO BE DELIVERED AT THE RATE OF ABOUT 40 A YEAR UNTIL MAY 1978. (C) NO INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE TO US REGARDING THE PATROL BOATS.

3. IN THE COURSE OF A MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 24 BETWEEN DEFENSE MINISTER AVEROFF AND THE JUSMAGG CHIEF, THE LATTER REMARKED ON THE REPORTS REGARDING A SPEED-UP OF FRENCH ARMS DELIVERIES. AVEROFF RESPONDED WITH THE COMMENT THAT THERE MIGHT BE AN ACCELERATION IN THE DELIVERY OF SOME ITEMS BUT THAT AT THE PRESENT TIME HE DOES NOT KNOW WITH CERTAINTY WHICH ONES WOULD BE SO AFFECTED. AVEROFF THEN TOLD THE JUSMAGG CHIEF THAT HE WOULD BE GOING TO PARIS WITHIN THE NEXT SEVERAL DAYS TO FOLLOW UP ON THIS MATTER. KUBISCH

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